

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 SAA-02 IO-13 CIAE-00 DODE-00
PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01
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R 060330Z JUL 78
FM AMEMBASSY KABUL
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8913
INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA
AMEMBASSY DACCA
AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

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EO 11652: NA
TAGS: PINT, PEPR, IR, PK, AF
SUBJ: AFGHAN GOVERNMENT OFFICIALLY DENIES ACCURACY OF
RECENT BBC REPORTS

REF: KABUL 5414

1. RADIO KABUL THE EVENING OF JULY 3 ISSUED A
STATEMENT THAT, CONTRARY TO RECENT BBC REPORTS,
NOTHING REGARDING THE HELMAND WATERS TREATY,
BORDER ARRANGEMENTS WITH PAKISTAN, AND AFGHANIS-
TAN'S INTERNATIONAL TREATY OBLIGATIONS, WAS DIS-
CUSSED DURING RECENT BBC INTERVIEWS WITH PRIME
MINISTER TARAQI AND FOREIGN MINISTER AMIN. DURING
OUR JULY 4 RECEPTION, AN EMBASSY OFFICER WAS TOLD
BY DEPUTY MINISTER OF FRONTIER AFFAIRS SAR FERAZ
MOMAND (WHOSE MINISTRY IS DIRECTLY RESPONSIBLE FOR
THE AFGHANISTAN-PAKISTAN BORDER ISSUE) THAT
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THE BBC CORRESPONDENT "INVENTED" THE WHOLE DIS-
CUSSION FOR HIS OWN "OBVIOUS" PURPOSES. AMIN,
HIMSELF, IN A SPEECH ON THE SAME DAY SAID THAT
"SOME SOURCES AND IMPERIALIST NEWS AGENCIES ARE
NOT SATISFIED WITH OUR FRIENDSHIP" WITH IRAN AND
PAKISTAN, AND ARE "PUBLISHING FALSE PROPAGANDA,
BUT WE ARE SINCERELY INTERESTED IN OUR FRIENDSHIP."

2. COMMENT: THE AFGHAN GOVERNMENT MAY BE TRYING TO PLAY IT BOTH WAYS; VERBALLY PUTTING ITS NEIGHBORS ON NOTICE THAT KABUL HAS THE MEANS TO CREATE BILATERAL DIFFICULTIES SHOULD THE REGIME DECIDE TO DO SO, AND OFFICIALLY DENYING THAT ANYTHING OF THE SORT WAS SAID OR IMPLIED BY TARAKI OR AMIN. WHATEVER THE CASE MAY BE, THE AFGHANS ARE PUBLICLY PROFESSING FRIENDSHIP FOR THEIR TWO MUSLIM NEIGHBORS, AND DENIGRATING "TOOLS OF IMPERIALIST PROPAGANDA" WHICH ALLEGEDLY INVENT CONVERSATIONS. WHETHER ISLAMABAD AND, ESPECIALLY, TEHRAN WILL BUY THESE OFFICIAL AFGHAN DISCLAIMERS REMAINS TO BE SEEN. THE BROUHAHA, HOWEVER, COULD CREATE FURTHER DIFFICULTIES FOR OUR BRITISH COLLEAGUES HERE WHO HAVE ALREADY BEEN CALLED ON THE AFGHAN CARPET FOR OSTENSIBLE PAST BBC "DISTORTIONS" OF EVENTS.
AMSTUTZ

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